

By the year 2017 this 24ha property will be a very different place from the dairy farm it is today

## Bold restoration plan will see 80,000 trees planted on a private Kaipara property

**C**UE HAVEN, owned by Thomas and Mahrukh Stazyk, is a 24ha former dairy & beef farm overlooking the Kaipara Harbour at Araparera about an hour's drive north of Auckland.

About 5ha is already covered in native forest and wetlands, but the Stazyks plan to plant more than 80,000 trees over the next seven years to create a forest ecosystem by restoring the connections between the forest remnants.

In the long term they see it as a reserve and retreat where visitors can relax and enjoy the forest and bird life. They intend to covenant the property with the QEII Trust in order to protect it into perpetuity for the community to enjoy.

The restoration plan was conceived by the Stazyks with the 'invaluable' assistance of ecologist Rodney Straka, of Scrub Consult-

**Left & Below: the first memorial plantings of kahikatea in the wetland area**

**Mahrukh and Thomas with the view to the Kaipara**

**Below: the cowshed now converted to a nursery**



ants Ltd, and funding from DoCs Biodiversity Advice Fund.

The plan originally provided for the ecological restoration of the property to be completed by 2024. However, the Stazyks are keen to see it completed by 2017 so "we can enjoy a revegetated CUE Haven before we are too old!"

With the assistance of school groups, volunteers, Rodney Straka's Scrub Growers nursery in Waitoki and with some funding from the Rodney District Council and the Auckland Regional Council, Thomas and Mahrukh have al-

**Some of the hundreds of plants ready for planting**



ready planted about 9,000 trees and hope to plant a further 17,000 this year. All trees are eco-sourced from Scrub Growers.

In 2009, they decided to incorporate into the CUE Haven plan memorial tree plantings for people who want a living memorial to loved family members and friends

(*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*) as the memorial trees, especially as they are starting in the wetland area.

"These are very slow growing and so we get about 5 year-old eco-sourced trees. Although these are only about a metre high, they are New Zealand's tallest native trees, growing to 50 metres or more, and can live several hundred years."

As the canopy is established, other trees such as kauri and rimu will also be planted.

The disused milking shed is being converted into a nursery so the Stazyks can

**New plantings will join existing protected bush fragments like this one**



propagate their own seedlings for future plantings. The nursery includes planting and propagation tables, a hardening area, an irrigation system for seedlings and young plants and storage facilities.

They also have a possum and pest control programme in place and recently made improvements to an old cattle race on the property to provide easier access for volunteers and planting teams.

The word 'CUE' in the property's name was chosen because of its connotations of a mental stimulus, a motion to begin or a course of action. Thomas and Mahrukh hope the experience at CUE Haven will "provide people who visit with a stimulus to embark on a journey to cultivate understanding and enlightenment."

For more information see [www.cuehaven.com](http://www.cuehaven.com)

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